

Art,

I'm not sure what I can add to the material below that I sent you on April 8. With regards to the *Upper Animas Mining District* I can tell you that this site is an extremely high priority for our Regional Administrator, the BLM, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. We are proceeding with an RI/FS in order to support our enforcement action and to persuade the local community that the NPL is the only means to addressing the contamination. Without adequate Pipeline resources we are at a disadvantage in our ongoing negotiations with Sunnyside Gold Corp.

*Colorado Smelter* is our newest NPL site. The site is the subject of media attention in Pueblo. There is an ongoing controversy over the impact of listing on the ability of residents to refinance their homes and for new buyers to secure FHA insured and conventional mortgages. We are working with HUD to try to defuse this issue which has been inflamed by local opponents of listing, one of whom is a real estate agent and property owner. The sooner we can get properties investigated and cleaned up, the sooner the cloud will lift. Having adequate Pipeline resources is essential to our progress.

- 1) **Upper Animas Mining District, Silverton, Colorado.** This is a “pre-listing” site in south west Colorado. Silverton is the only incorporated municipality in San Juan County, Colorado, United States. Silverton is a former silver mining camp, most or all of which is now included in a federally designated National Historic Landmark District. Four smelters operated in and around Silverton. The Animas River, which flows through Silverton, is perhaps the last major watershed in Colorado with a history of intensive hard rock mining without a Superfund NPL designation. As in other heavily mined areas the Animas River has been severely impacted and there are potentially high levels of metals (lead, arsenic, cadmium) in community soils. Silverton is an economically distressed community which has been manipulated by the Sunnyside Gold Corp. to be extremely apprehensive of an NPL listing. EPA, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the BLM all support listing. EPA has been active in the community for a number of years and the removal program has done work where it can to address some of the sources of contaminated surface water. In order to convince the community that the only means at hand to deal with the multiple sources and immense scale of contamination is an NPL listing, EPA is embarking on a RI/FS-like set of studies. At the same time the regional enforcement program is conducting an intensive investigation in an attempt to link Sunnyside, which has very limited resources, to its corporate parents which are major international mining companies. Additionally, enforcement is exploring other PRPs. **Having adequate Pipeline resources to conduct the studies will enable the region to: 1) help convince the community that without an NPL listing the Animas River and it's tributaries as well as their community will not get cleaned up, and 2) better understand Sunnyside's liability in order to pursue a potential enforcement action or cash-out settlement. Our unmet need in FY15 is \$532,000.**
- 2) **Colorado Smelter NPL Site, Pueblo, Colorado.** EPA and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment completed a site assessment that revealed elevated levels of lead and arsenic in residential soils and large slag piles in the vicinity of the former

Colorado Smelter and in December 2014, EPA added the site to the NPL. Pueblo has the highest unemployment rate of any major city in Colorado, and the two neighborhoods within the NPL study area are among the poorest in the city. The site is considered to be located in an EJ community. As a result of the listing, HUD and local lenders have suspended issuing new mortgages within the study area. This has become a major issue, especially for a few vocal opponents of the NPL listing. **It is critical to our efforts to maintain public support for the cleanup that we move expeditiously to sample residential properties for lead and arsenic contamination from historic smelting. We are receiving funds from the ASARCO Trust in FY15, which will help, but we have an unmet need of \$800,000.**

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